

TOP SECRET53334
Copy no. 5

13 April 1951

MEMORANDUM FOR

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SUBJECT: Census and Verification of All Armed Forces and
Armaments

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In partial fulfillment of your request for a Special Estimate on the above subject, I transmit herewith the views of the National Estimates Board. These views were written in the light of contributions from the IAC agencies which are being made available to [redacted], but the views are those of the Board and have not been coordinated with the IAC agencies.

1. The USSR may welcome a discussion of an agreement on census and verification of armed forces and armaments in the hope that:
 - a. Propaganda advantages might be won by denouncing the efforts of the US to secure a precise, unequivocal agreement to efforts to block any agreement on armaments.
 - b. Such a discussion might divide the US from its allies because of their eagerness to avoid the sacrifices necessitated by disarmament, and to find some basis for an accommodation with the USSR.
 - c. The US, to avoid dissension with its allies, might be induced to accept an agreement under which the USSR would gain more than the US.
2. Since the knowledge of Soviet armaments possessed by the US is fragmentary and in many cases shadowy, while the knowledge of US armaments possessed by the USSR is extensive and precise, from the point of view of acquiring intelligence information, the US would gain much more than the USSR from an agreement on census and verification which was honestly and fully carried out.

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3. We believe that the USSR, if it should enter into an agreement on census and verification, would not carry out the agreement honestly and fully.

4. If it were possible to draft an agreement of census and verification which would protect the interests of the US, we believe it unlikely that the USSR would enter into any such agreement.

5. We believe that the USSR, in any event, would not enter into any agreement of census and verification unless it believed that the agreement provided it with the opportunity:

a. of filling critical gaps in its information about the US before the US could fill critical gaps in its information about the USSR, and

b. of breaking off the agreement when it had filled these critical gaps.

6. Under any agreement for census and verification there is grave danger that the USSR would find means to accomplish the purposes set forth in paragraph 5.

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WALTER B. SMITH
Director

OAD/NE/SK:ji

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